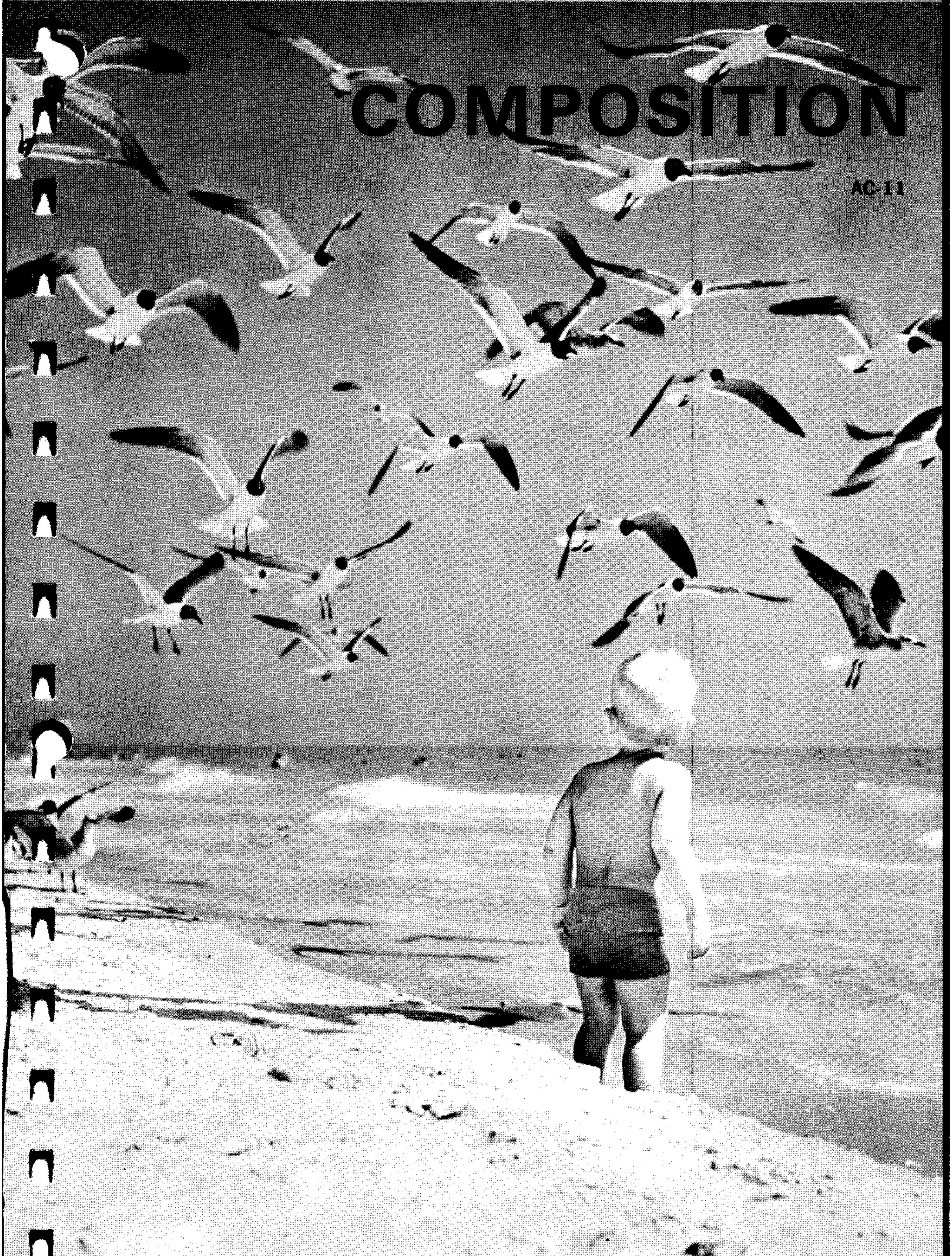
Kodak CUSTOMER SERVICE PAMPHLET

COMPOSITION

AC-11



COMPOSITION

Photographic composition is simply the selection and arrangement of subjects within the picture area.

Some arrangements are made by placing figures or objects in certain positions. Others are made by choosing a point of view. You may move your camera a few inches or a few feet and change the composition decidedly. Some "chance shots" may turn out to have good composition, but most good pictures are created. How do you create a picture? First, you learn the rules for good composition given in this pamphlet. After you learn these rules, you'll realize that pictures with good composition take careful planning, and sometimes patient waiting. But it's not as hard as it may sound. You'll find that the rules of composition will become part of your thinking when you are looking for pictures, and soon they will become second nature to you.

HAVE A STRONG CENTER OF INTEREST

Avoid putting your center of interest in the center of your picture. If the main subject is smack in the middle of the picture, it looks static and uninteresting. For pleasing composition, place your center of interest according to the "rule of thirds": divide your picture area into thirds, both vertically and horizontally; then place your center of interest at one of the four places where the lines intersect.

Have one strong center of interest. You may want to include a secondary subject, but make sure that it doesn't detract from your main subject.

TYPES OF CAMERAS. Although all cameras are basically the same, some cameras offer certain features that others don't. For the purposes of this pamphlet, we can say that there are basically three types of cameras: simple cameras, adjustable cameras, and automatic cameras.

1 **Simple Cameras.** To make things easy, we'll call any camera "simple" that doesn't offer a wide range of manual adjustments for shutter speed, distance setting, and lens opening, and that doesn't have an electric-eye exposure control. Simple cameras have only one or two shutter speeds. And most simple cameras are factory-focused for normal picture-taking distances (4 or 5 feet to infinity). Although some simple cameras have a fixed lens opening, others have an adjustment for two or three different sizes of lens openings. Set the lens opening according to the table in the camera instruction manual or the film instruction sheet.

2 **Adjustable Cameras.** An adjustable camera has controls that allow you to take pictures under a wider range of conditions than is possible with a simple camera. Adjustable cameras have a selection of shutter speeds, including very fast shutter speeds for action shots. Most adjustable cameras have focusing lenses, and can be focused for close-ups—2 to 3 feet and sometimes closer. Adjustable cameras also offer a wide range of lens openings. These lens openings are set by moving a lever, a pointer, or a dial, and are usually designated by *f*-numbers. (Lens openings on some cameras are designated by exposure value numbers.)

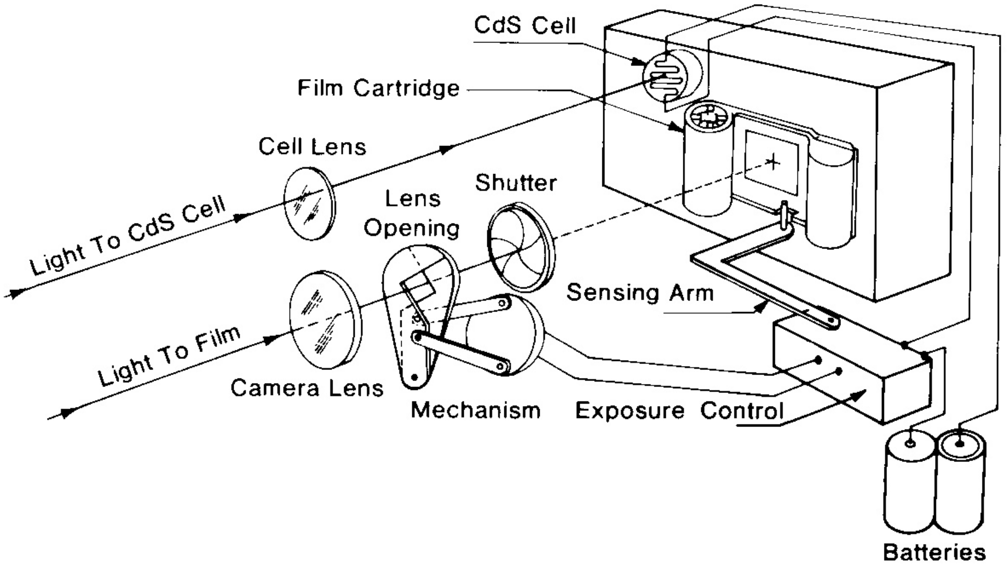
A typical series of *f*-numbers is *f*/2.8, 4, 5.6, 8, 11, 16, and 22. The small *f*-numbers on your camera correspond to large lens openings, and the large *f*-numbers refer to small lens openings. The largest lens opening in this series is *f*/2.8 and the smallest is *f*/22.

3 **Automatic Cameras.** An automatic camera combines the ease of operation of a simple camera with some of the picture-taking versatility of an adjustable camera. Automatic cameras have an electric-eye exposure control that

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW A CDS EXPOSURE CONTROL WORKS? Automatic cameras have an exposure control to regulate automatically the amount of light that reaches the film when you take a picture. Although this is a sophisticated piece of equipment, you can understand the basic principles involved.

When you insert a 126 film cartridge into a camera and close the door, a sensing arm finds the location of the film-speed notch in the film cartridge and adjusts the system's sensitivity to the film speed (ASA). On some cameras, you must set the film speed manually.

Light reflected from the scene you are photographing determines the resistance of the CdS cell and thus controls the flow of current from the batteries through the exposure control. The brighter the scene, the greater the flow of current. The current then controls the mechanism which adjusts the lens opening (in some cameras it also adjusts the shutter speed) according to the brightness of the scene and the speed of the film.



LIKE MORE INFORMATION? Kodak has a whole series of Photo Information Books and Customer Service Pamphlets to improve your picture-taking. Your photo dealer is the man to see. He will recommend the right book for you.

Kodak is a trademark.

Consumer Markets Division
EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY • ROCHESTER, N. Y. 14650

Photography in Five Minutes
KODAK Pamphlet No. AC-13

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

4-69 Major Revision
69-L-RH-DX

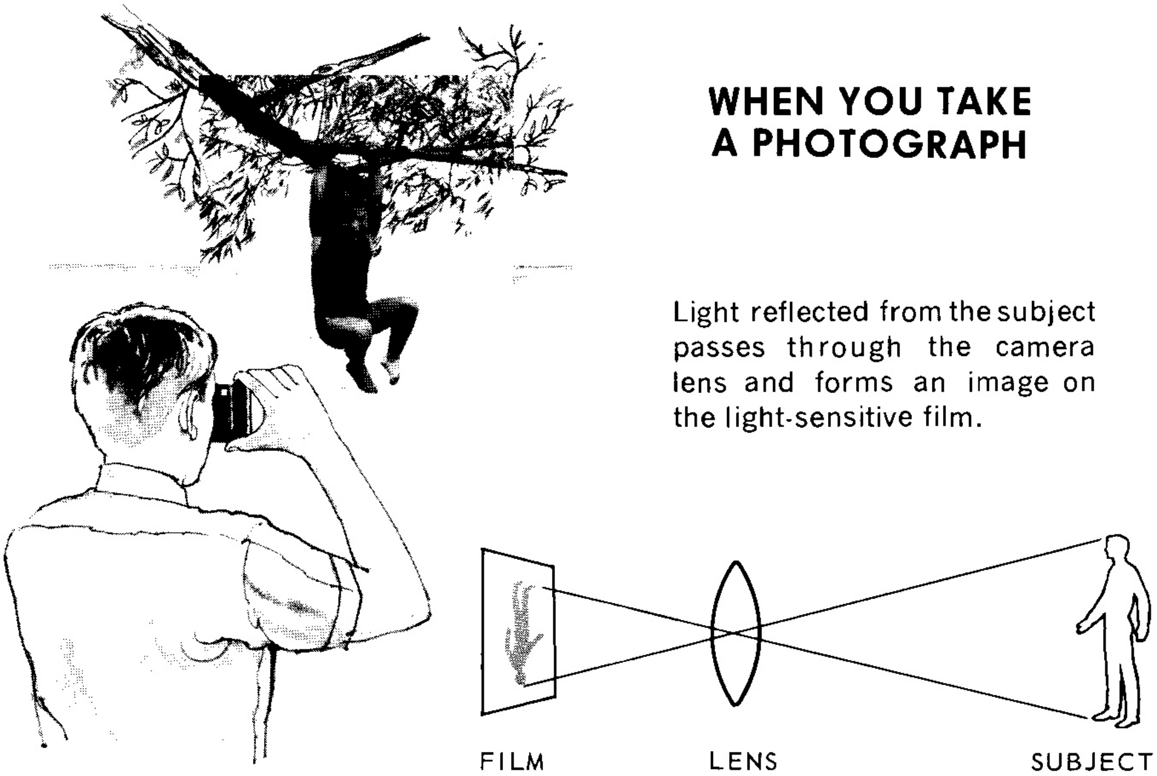
regulates the size of the lens opening or the shutter speed (or both). Some automatic cameras have a fixed focus and a fixed shutter speed. On others, you must set the correct subject distance only, and on still others, you set the shutter speed or lens opening as well.

FILM. Film is a light-sensitive material that records an image. Just as there are different types of cameras, there are different types of films. When you purchase film, it is important that you get the "right" film for your particular needs. Keep the following points in mind:

1. Film is either color or black-and-white. Always specify which you want.

2. Specify whether you want film for snapshots or for slides.

3. Every camera uses film of a particular SIZE (indicated by a number—for example, 126, 127, 135, or 620). Check the instruction manual that came with your camera to see what size of film your camera uses. If you cannot locate your manual, take your camera with you when you go to buy film.



WHEN YOU TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH

Light reflected from the subject passes through the camera lens and forms an image on the light-sensitive film.

TIPS FOR BETTER PICTURES. No matter what camera and what film you are using, you'll take better pictures if you remember the following tips:

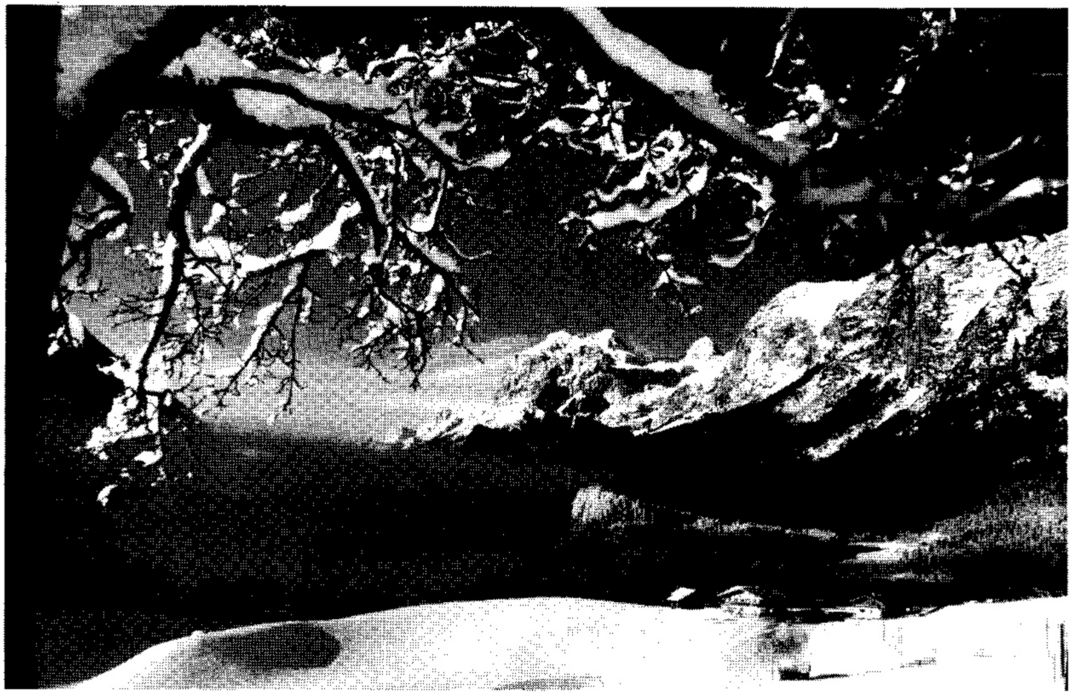
1. Keep your camera steady.

2. Take close-ups of your subject when possible. With most cameras you can get as close as 4 or 5 feet. With some cameras you can get closer. Check your camera manual.

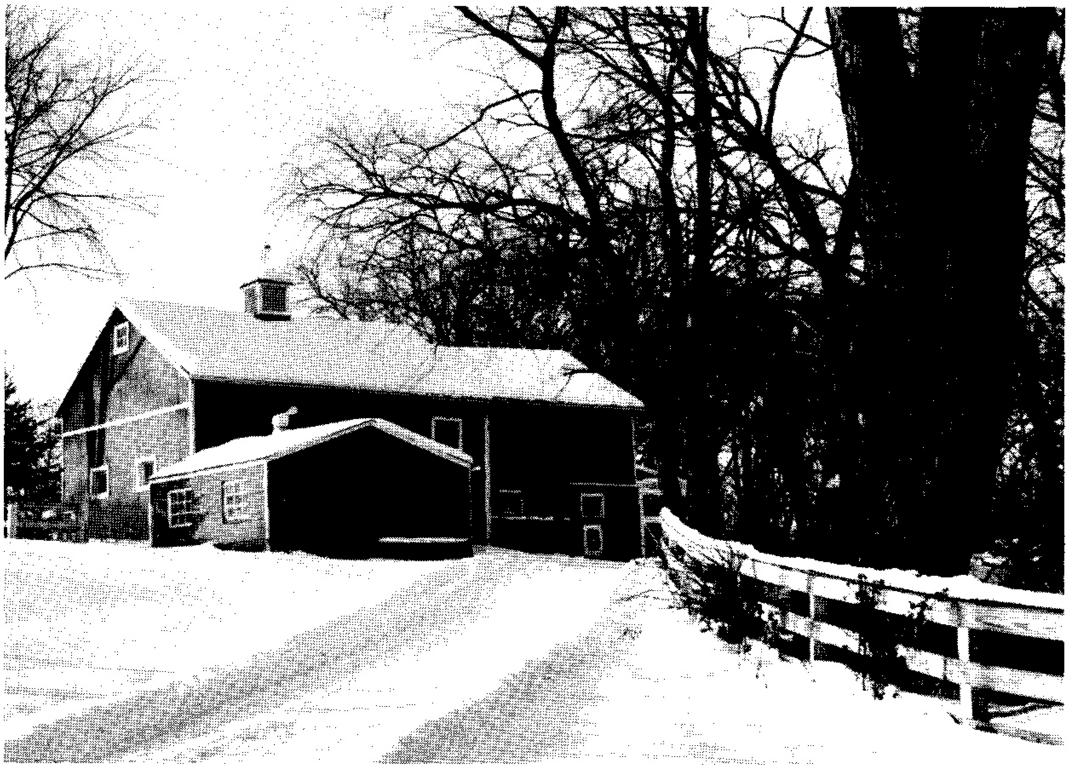
3. Keep it simple. Have **one** center of interest and avoid cluttered backgrounds.

4. Keep 'em busy. Have your subjects doing something natural instead of stiffly staring at the camera.

5. Include a foreground subject when shooting distant scenes.



Framing a scene by including a tree or branch in the picture helps create a feeling of depth and leads your eye toward the main subject. This snow-covered branch stands out against the clear sky and helps tell the story of winter.



A commonplace farm building becomes the subject of a charming composition — chiefly through a careful choice of viewpoint. Notice how the leading lines of the road and fence guide your eye toward the main subject.

WATCH THE BACKGROUND

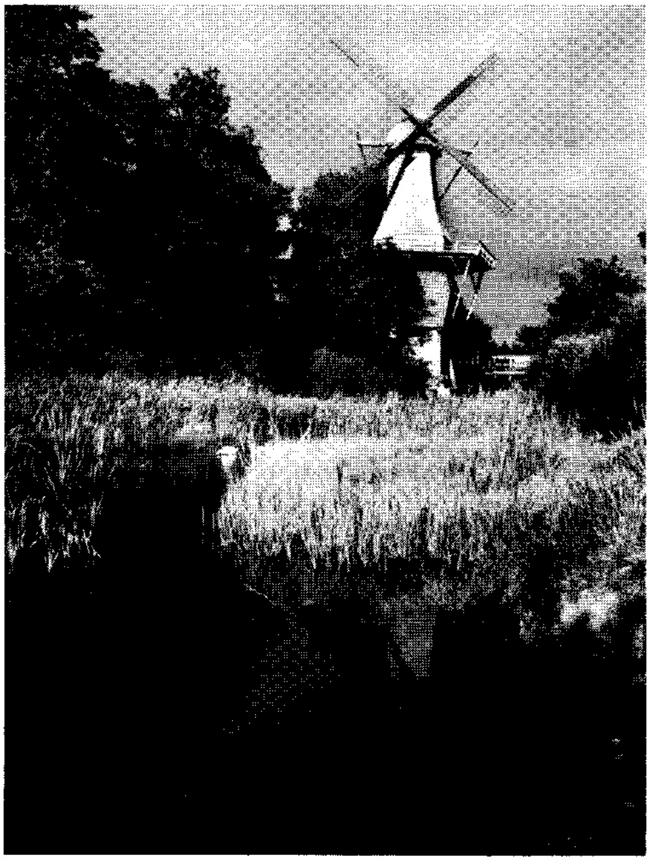
The background can make or break a picture. It can add to the composition and help set the "mood" of a picture, but it can also be very distracting if it is cluttered. Before you snap the shutter, stop for a minute and look at the background. Is there a telephone pole "growing" out of your subject's head? Beware of an uncovered trellis or the side of a shingled house when you take informal portraits or groups, because prominent horizontal or vertical lines always detract from your subject. Foliage makes a better background. A blue sky is an excellent background, particularly in color pictures. Remember, look beyond your subject because your camera will!

ADD INTEREST TO YOUR SCENIC SHOTS

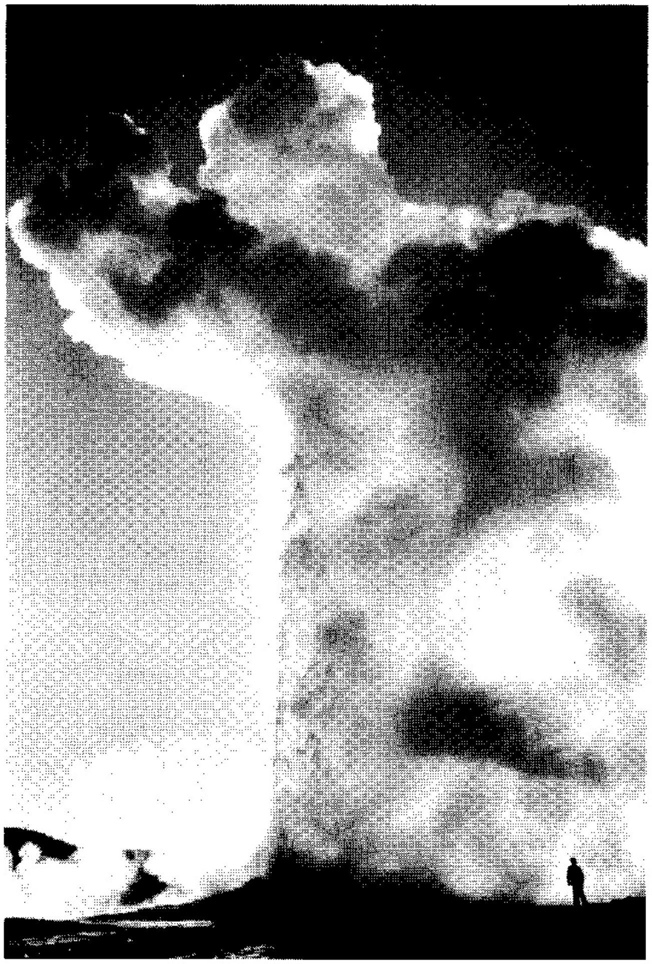
In scenic shots, it is often a help rather than a hindrance to include people who may be in the field of view. They should, however, look at the scene—not at the camera—and they should be at least 25 feet from the camera. For color pictures, have your "foreground figures" wear colorful clothing, preferably red or yellow, to add color and interest.

Frame your scenics with an interesting foreground, such as a tree or a branch. Watch the depth of field so that both the foreground and the scene will be in focus. It is very distracting to have an out-of-focus foreground.

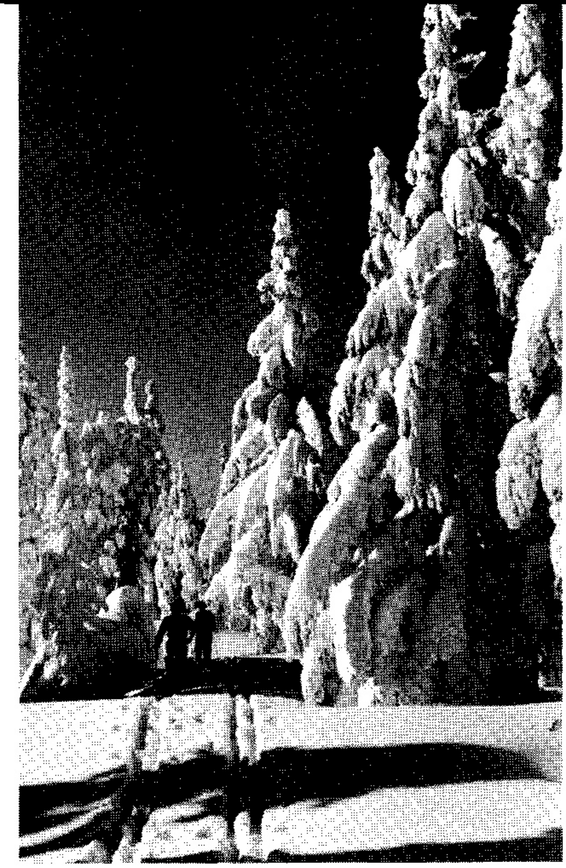
To repeat, composition is simply the selection and arrangement of objects within the picture area. If you follow the suggestions given here, your own experience will teach you a great deal about this subject. When you look through the viewfinder, have the whole picture in mind.



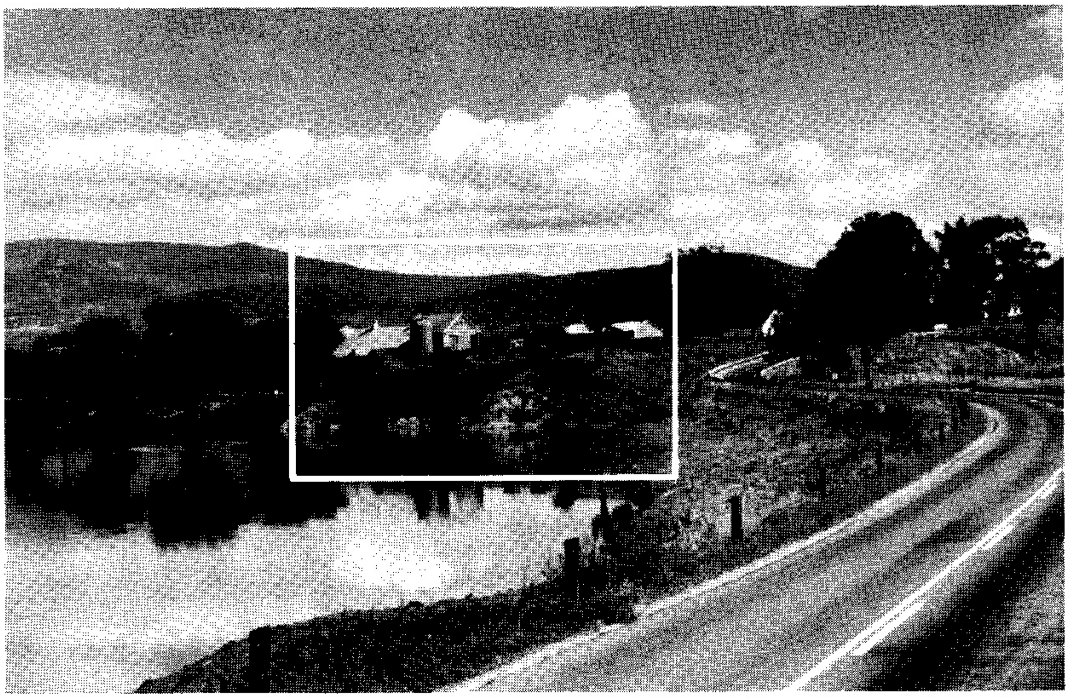
Notice the position of the main subject and think of the "rule of thirds." The windmill is light, so it attracts your attention; the water helps lead your eye from the edge of the picture to the main subject.



The small figure in the foreground emphasizes the grandeur of Old Faithful geyser.



Snow pictures are ineffective if they have large, empty expanses of glaring white. By making this picture at the right time of day, the photographer succeeded in capturing prominent shadows which contribute much to the composition.



Composition can often be improved by masking or cropping the negative, and then enlarging. As originally taken, this picture is a good record. From a pictorial standpoint, however, it includes too much, and the road leads your eye out of the picture. Cover up all except the area outlined in white and see how much better the picture becomes.

Consumer Markets Division

EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY • ROCHESTER, N. Y. 14650

Composition
KODAK Pamphlet No. AC-11

4-68 Minor Revision
75-L-RPP-BE
Printed in the United States of America

Kodak CUSTOMER SERVICE PAMPHLET

photography in 5 minutes

without the technicalities

AC-13

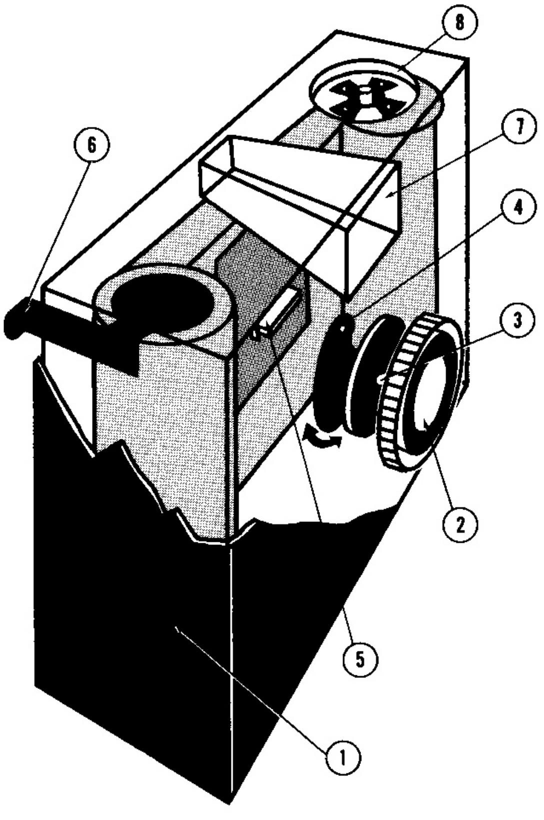
Every art and every science has basic elements. Photography, too, has elements that are common to it — LIGHT, a SUBJECT, a CAMERA, and FILM.

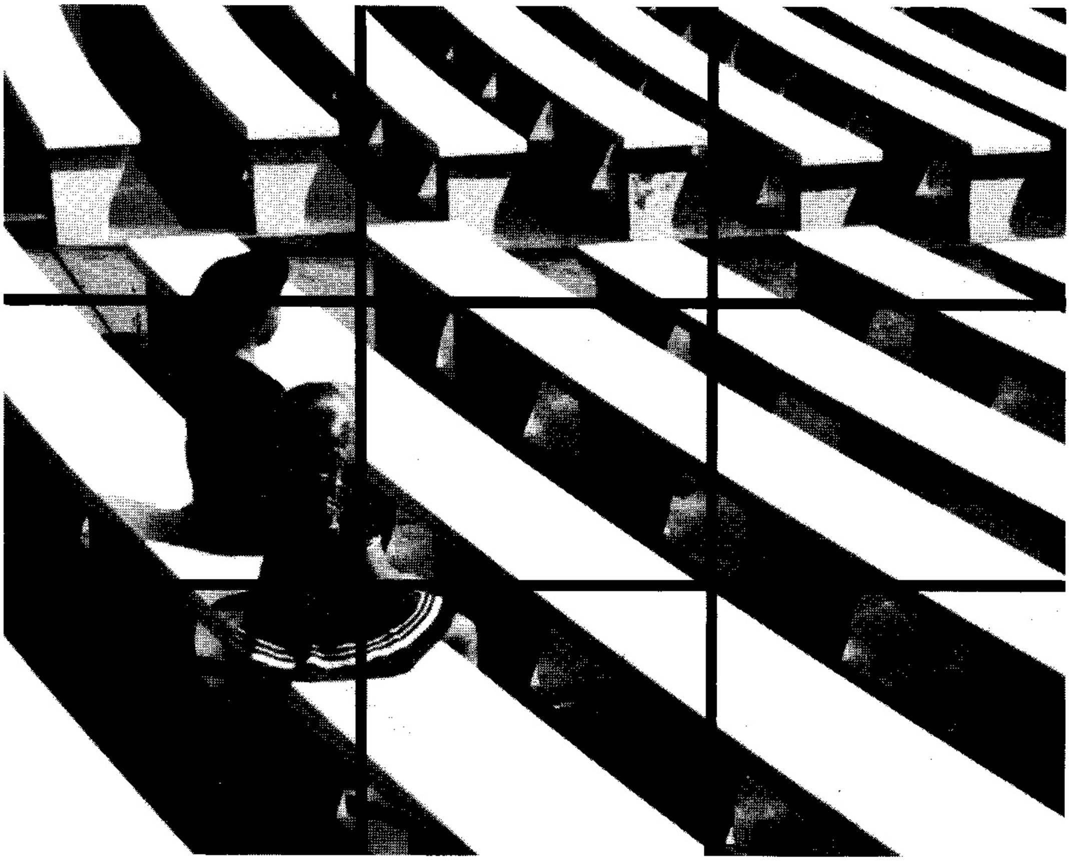
LIGHT. To record a photographic image, film must be exposed to light. For good pictures, you must expose the film in your camera to the *proper amount* of light. If too little light reaches the film, your pictures will be too dark (underexposed). If too much light reaches the film, your pictures will be too light (overexposed). It is important to read the exposure data on the instruction sheet that comes with your film.

A SUBJECT. A good subject is whatever appeals to you. Such subjects as a giggling little girl, a setting sun, a happy bride, and a snowcapped mountain peak are favorites with most everybody. But try the unusual, too. Good pictures are often initiated by minds that see the common in an uncommon way. Keep your imagination oiled by constant practice.

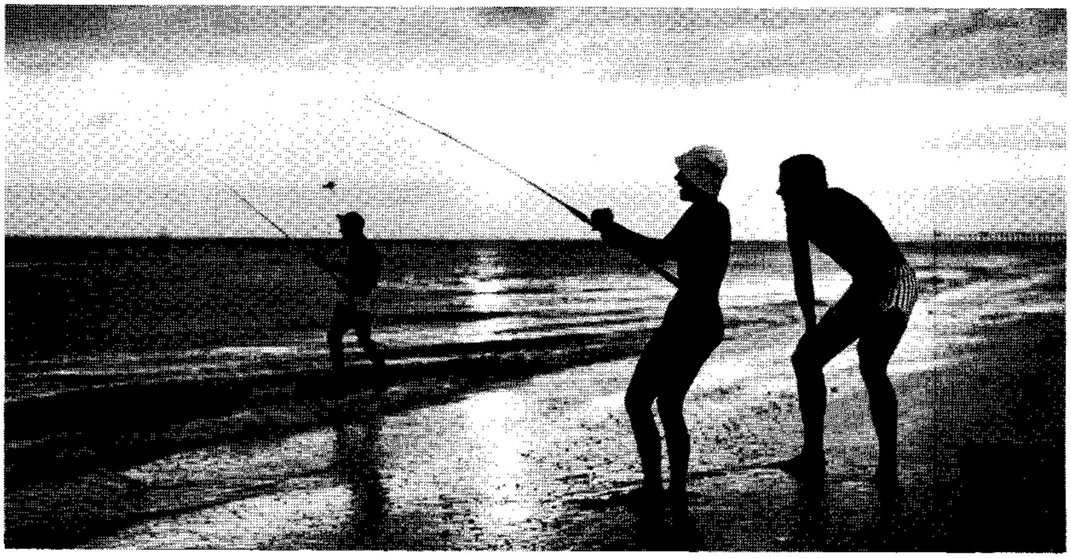
THE BASIC CAMERA. All cameras have the same basic parts:

1. A lighttight box to keep light out and serve as a frame to hold the other parts.
2. A lens to collect the light reflected from a subject which forms an image on the film. The lens may be factory-set for normal picture-taking distances, or it may be of the focusing type. The focusing type of lens is adjustable for the correct distance between the camera and the subject.
3. A lens opening to control the intensity of light reaching the film. The size of the lens opening may be fixed or adjustable.
4. A shutter to control the length of time that light reaches the film. The shutter keeps all light out until you take a picture. Simple cameras have one or two shutter speeds. More versatile cameras have a wide range of shutter speeds. A fast shutter speed has the advantage of letting you capture action scenes.
5. A shutter release to trigger the shutter.
6. A film-advance mechanism to advance the film for the next exposure.
7. A viewfinder to frame your picture area. If your camera didn't have a viewfinder, you wouldn't be able to tell what your camera "sees" when you take the picture. Today, most cameras have the eye-level type of viewfinder.
8. *Most* cameras have a socket for a flashcube, a flashbulb, or a flashbulb holder.





Divide your picture area into thirds, both vertically and horizontally. Place your center of interest at one of the four places where the lines intersect. Placing the subjects according to the "rule of thirds" and having them look into the picture created a good center of interest for the pattern of the curving seats in this amphitheater.



The fisherman in the background helps to balance this composition. The photographer has placed the subjects according to the "rule of thirds," and he has created a feeling of depth by having the subjects at different distances from the camera.

KNOW THE ANGLES

When you find a subject, don't just walk up to it and snap the shutter. Walk around the subject and look at it from all angles; then select the best angle to shoot from. Shooting from a low angle provides an uncluttered sky backgound outdoors. However, in bad weather you'll want to shoot from a high angle and keep the sky out of the picture. Overcast skies look bleak and unappealing in pictures.

Consider the horizon line. Never cut your picture in half by having the horizon in the middle of the picture. You can have the horizon low to accent spaciousness — especially nice if you have some white, fluffy clouds against a blue sky — or high to suggest closeness.

MOVE IN CLOSE

Some amateur photographers look through the viewfinder and start backing away from the subject. This is not only bad from a safety point of view, but it can also be bad for composition! When you look through your viewfinder, move toward your subject until you have eliminated everything that does not add to your picture. Even though you can crop your picture later if you plan to enlarge it, it's always better to crop carefully when you take the picture.

Take close-ups to convey a feeling of intimacy, and long shots for airiness and depth.

USE LEADING LINES

Lines should lead into, not out of, the picture. A leading line can be almost anything, such as a road or a shadow. The road will always be there; it's just a matter of choosing the right angle to make it lead into the picture. A shadow, however, is an ever-changing thing. There may be only one time in the day when it is just right. So if possible, be patient and wait for the good composition.